



## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES PROBATION DEPARTMENT

9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90242  
(562) 940-2501



**JERRY E. POWERS**  
Chief Probation Officer

### **“SECRET ANGELS MAKE COLLEGE POSSIBLE FOR HIGH RISK TEENAGERS”**

**DATE: Thursday May 16, 2013**

**TIME: Media: Arrive at 5:00p for set up**

**LOCATION: Almansor Court**

**700 S Almansor St Alhambra, CA 91801**

**CONTACT: Carol Lin-Special Projects/Media**

**[Carol.Lin@probation.lacounty.gov](mailto:Carol.Lin@probation.lacounty.gov)**

**562-445-9297 cell**

Thursday night in Alhambra, California, more than 400 people will dine and celebrate with 150 Los Angeles County foster youth. But this is no ordinary group of teenagers. Within this group are 40 foster kids who have beat *incredible* odds and adversity and are graduating from high school this year.

“It requires courage, determination and frankly, a village of mentors and supporters to accomplish this goal,” says, Michael Verner, one of a handful of Los Angeles County Probation Officers who volunteer to put on this annual gala dinner called “Success is Our Future” where foster teens will be awarded certificates of accomplishment.

Some teens receive much more than an award certificate. Group homes, where many of these youth reside, nominate them for scholarships provided with Probation fundraising but with a substantial amount donated by two secret angels. They are private individuals who this year, donated \$68,000 to offer continuous financial support for six foster teens enabling them to attend college.

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This is a rare opportunity for reporters to be able to interview foster youth about their life experiences and a timely opportunity. This is high school graduation season.

Los Angeles County Probation reports that less than half of foster youth, particularly foster teens who require intensive supervision by probation officers, ever graduate from high school.

“That is what makes this sight so wonderful, so remarkable, to see these kids all dressed up, some for the first time in their lives and stand on a platform to receive a certificate,” says Bureau Chief David Mitchell.

#### **Available Interviews:**

- Michael Verner, Probation Director
- Jed Minoff, Probation Director (on behalf of the Neil McDowell Trust)
- Amber Crumes-Past Recipient of scholarship
- Melissa Hebrand-Past Recipient of scholarship
- Madeline Guerrero-Current High School graduate